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# SECTION 3

## PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVES

Law Enforcement Coordination  
Community Based Public Safety Strategies  
Gun Violence Reduction  
State & Federal Partnerships  
Public Awareness

### PUBLIC SAFETY MISSION

The third mission of the U.S. Attorney's Office is the advancement of comprehensive crime prevention and effective public safety. The following initiatives represent the increasing involvement of the United States Attorney's Office in law enforcement and crime prevention activities in the district.



### LAW ENFORCEMENT COORDINATION

The first goal within this mission is to support enhanced regional cooperation among law enforcement agencies. The district's Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee (LECC) assists law enforcement agencies in a wide variety of areas. LECC promotes cooperative strategic planning among law enforcement agencies in the district, and supports HIDTA and OCDEFI initiatives that improve coordination of drug law enforcement programs. The district's strategic initiative around which this report is organized is one result of the LECC outreach.

The strategies that guide the LECC are to:

- ☐ Promote computer assisted networks that enable law enforcement agencies to share data for greater investigative and operational cooperation, and
- ☐ Support regional data, analytical and cooperative planning capabilities of local law enforcement agencies through crime mapping technology.

In the past year, LECC has been effective in developing coordinated enforcement initiatives with State agencies. These initiatives promote regional planning and investigative capabilities of local police agencies through cooperative information-sharing networks such as RIONet and Fuginet. The LECC Coordinator represented the U.S. Attorney's Office in the law enforcement community through active involvement as an officer or member of governing councils of organizations such as the Rio Grande Valley Police Chiefs Association, Combined Law Enforcement Intelligence Service, and Montgomery County-Wide Law Enforcement Council. LECC participation in such groups facilitates sharing of equipment, personnel, information, funds and other resources among law enforcement agencies.

During 2000, the following activities were undertaken or completed within the specified initiatives:



The district's LECC COPS Education Project was funded by a grant from the COPS Office. It developed training blueprints for law enforcement agencies implementing community policing programs.

An LECC advisory board designed and produced the program of train-the-trainer courses which were, in turn, taught at regional sites in the district for officers and supervisors involved in community policing. Week-long classes were held for certified law enforcement instructors from departments throughout the district. The participating departments used these instructors to teach COPS curriculums in their own departments and assist other departments in their local region. The program brought community policing training to hundreds of local law enforcement officers throughout the district. The cadre of trainers have served as a resource network for the continuing innovation and long-term viability of community policing that will exist well beyond the funding phase of the grant.

An Internet Web site was developed to serve as a venue for training and information resources, as well as an avenue for communication: [www.COPS2000.com](http://www.COPS2000.com). This project was completed in 2000 and consisted of the development and delivery of seven train-the-trainer modules; one major conference for campus oriented policing which included municipal and school law enforcement, school and campus administrators and attorneys; and two specialized campus oriented policing modules which were repeated throughout the district.

#### **LECC Border Initiatives**

In partnership with United States Border Patrol, the LECC coordinator organized two meetings with South Texas law enforcement and law enforcement officials from Mexico to discuss topics of mutual interest such as repatriation of fugitives and Immigration and Naturalization policies and procedures.

This district is committed to the continuation of these meetings which are intended to provide an on-going forum for dialogue among the international law enforcement officials.

Through affiliation with the Border Research and Technology Center in San Diego, the LECC sponsored a Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Fair to South Texas. Forty-four vendors introduced and exhibited the latest law enforcement technology for officials from 80 agencies and 11 states.

### **Advanced Law Enforcement Training**

The LECC is a forum for information on changes in law and procedures that affect law enforcement. The LECC Coordinator manages a program which is exceptionally active and effective in one of the largest and most diverse districts in the nation. In this district, there are regional LECCs throughout the 43 counties of south and southeast Texas which promote innovative training for law enforcement. The Rio Grande Valley Regional LECC Committee is especially active in projects that effect the region such as RIONet and the Crime Mapping Consortium which are discussed below.

One of the key responsibilities of the LECC Coordinator is to identify funding and training resources available through federal agencies and non-governmental entities for law enforcement programs in the district. In 2000, the district's LECC program continued to provide assistance to local agencies on federal law enforcement grant and funding provisions.

LECC facilitates access to legislative funding resources through technical assistance and training on qualification and application procedures. Training programs included a community oriented policing series, strategic planning for multi-agency investigations, civil rights briefings, counterfeit identification and narcotics detection. Through LECC, advanced law enforcement training was developed for integrated planning and complex federal investigation procedures. This training course utilizes national experts, prosecutors and JTF-6 military intelligence specialists in strategic planning procedures for long-term, multi-agency investigations.

### **RIONet**

RIONet is an ONDCP-funded research and development project of the Counterdrug Technology Assessment Center. It is a secure, virtual private network that will enable police agencies to share current information and stored data. RIONet began as an LECC project in 1996 to link local law enforcement agencies along the Texas-Mexico border through a high-speed, low-cost Internet-based network. In 2000, the system was developed to the point of connecting police agencies along the border through secure e-mail. The applications that will share current and historical information from their individual data bases are under development.

Subsequent development of the network is expected to bring additional police agencies into the secure network, and incorporate applications for teleconferencing to link training facilities of the participating departments.

This network has potential to provide a regional communication infrastructure that will include juvenile and criminal justice agencies, public schools, and other agencies in an information sharing network. This type of access to information has been recognized by community planners in the Rio Grande Valley as essential to their comprehensive strategies for juvenile crime and delinquency prevention.

As an adjunct to the RIONet project, the LECC has established a **South Texas Crime Mapping Consortium** to design and develop a crime mapping initiative which will meet the needs of the entire region.

## COMMUNITY-BASED STRATEGIES

The second goal of this mission is to support innovative, community-based strategies aimed at reducing crime, delinquency and violence in our communities. Here our strategy is threefold:

- ❑ Provide leadership in continued support of community-based initiatives such as Weed and Seed, Comprehensive Strategy, Youth-Focused Community Policing, and the State's Community Youth Development program.
- ❑ Promote community commitment for, and participation in crime reduction initiatives such as the Gun Violence Reduction Initiative.

- ❑ Promote training and assistance to local governments in efforts to prevent and resolve tension, violence or hate crimes resulting from racial and ethnic conflict.

Last year the Programs Division staff assisted communities and law enforcement agencies develop comprehensive and sustained crime reduction programs. The programs typically involve partnerships with the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs and other federal agencies, state agencies and local entities.

The initiatives of the Programs component encouraged comprehensive approaches to public safety that (1) involve community representatives working with law enforcement officials in planning public safety strategies; and (2) base decisions on reliable information gained through access to data, research and analysis. Successful programs of neighborhood-based, crime-fighting and community restoration are used as examples for communities and cities throughout the district.

## WEED & SEED INITIATIVES

Weed and Seed is a Department of Justice sponsored initiative aimed at reclaiming high crime areas, neighborhood-by-neighborhood. The office sponsors eight Officially Recognized Weed and Seed sites in the district:



**HOUSTON**  
**GALVESTON**  
**CORPUS CHRISTI NORTH**  
**CORPUS CHRISTI WEST**  
**BROWNSVILLE**  
**MCALLEN**  
**ALDINE , HARRIS COUNTY**  
**RICHMOND'S SHALOME ZONE,**  
**FT. BEND CO.**

In 2000, five additional communities applied for official recognition under the [Weed & Seed](#) Program. This community-based initiative involves local representatives in the strategic planning process with law enforcement and social services agencies. The LECC Coordinator, Community Outreach Specialist and two Texas National Guard soldiers assigned to the U.S. Attorney's Office work directly with the Weed & Seed Coordinators and Steering Committees. A federal prosecutor and a designated Assistant District Attorney are assigned to each site to coordinate the criminal cases that stem from the joint law enforcement initiative.

Last year through the Weed & Seed program and the partnership with the Texas National Guard, young people from four inner city communities participated in Drug Education for Youth



(DEFY) summer camps at military installations, and continue to take part in follow up activities with mentors.

### **COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR SERIOUS JUVENILE OFFENDERS**

The Texas Governor's Office, in partnership with the district's Programs Division, was awarded an OJJDP technical assistance grant for state-wide implementation of the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Chronic and Violent Juvenile Offenders. Texas, one of five states to be awarded this important technical assistance grant, selected the Southern District's Weed & Seed communities as pilot sites for the comprehensive planning technical assistance.

In 2000, Programs Division staff continued to actively participate with community key leaders, boards and project managers in the implementation of the community comprehensive strategies for controlling serious juvenile crime through prevention, early intervention and graduated sanctions.

## GUN VIOLENCE REDUCTION INITIATIVE

The Southern District of Texas has adopted a comprehensive and district-wide approach to reduction of gun violence. The initiative incorporates enhanced enforcement of federal firearms statutes, with focused community policing and community-based gun violence prevention strategies. The district has drawn on its experience with community-based public safety programs (Weed & Seed initiatives, LECC-COPS training programs and OJJDP comprehensive strategic planning) to effectively coordinate enforcement, intervention and prevention components. In partnership with the State of Texas Attorney General and his appointed area co-chairmen, this office has a lead role in the development of the [Texas Exile](#) initiative.

In addition to the law enforcement planning meetings, the Community Outreach Specialist works throughout the district with a contract consultant whose areas of expertise include juvenile justice and prevention. At the end of the two-year contract, the district will have a comprehensive, wrap-around program to assist communities in identifying local risk factors associated with gun violence, and programs that work in their specific community circumstances.

## STATE & FEDERAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Programs team works with the Texas Governor's Office in a federal technical assistance grant for state-wide implementation of the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Chronic and Violent Juvenile Offenders. The team maintains a partnership with Department of Justice and State of Texas program managers and planning consultants to assist community key leaders and steering committees in the design and implementation of strategic plans for juvenile crime prevention.

The Austin-Houston-Washington partnership has worked well. Community planners have drawn upon national research data on delinquency risk factors and programs with proven results. The State assigned National Guard soldiers to work with U.S. Attorney's Office in helping community committees work through strategic planning steps. The State's Community Youth Development, and the Department of Justice's Weed and Seed programs funded community projects based on recommendations of the steering committees. These included information sharing systems for early intervention with children exhibiting problem behavior, mentoring, after-school programs and summer camps. Funds forfeited from drug traffickers were made available to pay for police activities that supported the community enforcement plan.



### **PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD & THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY RURAL EMPOWERMENT ZONE**

This partnership promotes educational programs through regional conferences and national teleconferences on issues such as mentoring, child abuse, community access to federal resources, and drug abuse prevention among youth. The National Guard has assigned full-time soldiers and airmen to the U.S. Attorney's Office to serve as Drug Demand Reduction coordinators for youth, and the Empowerment Zone has provided staff support and office space for this community outreach effort.



### **OPERATION CRACKDOWN**

Crackdown is the operational name of a program in which Texas National Guard soldiers and airmen demolish structures associated with the drug trade. In 2000, the Texas National Guard worked with two Southern District of Texas Weed and Seed sites to demolish 18 structures in the Galveston site and 24 structures in the Corpus Christi site.

### **WEED & SEED PROGRAMS WITH COMPLIMENTARY INITIATIVES**

The Programs Division staff works to leverage initiatives such as Weed & Seed by incorporating related programs such as the Gun Violence Reduction Initiative of

Texas Exile Program, the State's Community Youth Development initiative, the Department of Justice's Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Chronic and Violent Juvenile Offenders, and the Youth Focused Community Policing programs of the Empowerment Zone and the Houston Enhanced Enterprise Community.

### **PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE WORK OF THE U. S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

The Public Safety mission includes providing an accurate and comprehensive public account of the work of the office. In 2000, the Programs Division added:

- ☐ Spanish language translations of major press releases;
- ☐ Publication of [Newsletters](#) that are posted on the Internet and hard copy distributed to all client agencies, the judiciary, the law enforcement community, the media, and the congressional delegation;
- ☐ Launched the district interactive Web site [www.usdoj.gov/usao/txs](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/txs) which has been widely acclaimed for its same-day posting of [press releases](#).



**ALEJANDRO “ALEX” LONGORIA  
HONORED FOR OUTSTANDING  
CONTRIBUTION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT**

United States Attorney Mervyn Mosbacker named McAllen Chief of Police Alex Longoria the first recipient of the Southern District of Texas Award for Outstanding Contribution to Cooperative Law Enforcement. U.S. Attorney Mosbacker cited Chief Longoria’s leadership in cooperative law enforcement among local, State and federal agencies in the district, and also for leading the effort to develop a forum for cooperative law enforcement for U.S. and Mexican agencies along the Southwest Border. Chief Longoria was instrumental in the development of RIONet, an Internet-based network that will link law enforcement agencies along the border. He received national recognition for his work in community policing and community-based public safety planning. Chief Longoria was a key leader in bringing the first Weed & Seed site to the Rio Grande Valley, and instituted comprehensive planning strategies to address drug abuse and violence by juveniles in McAllen.



Alex Longoria was hospitalized for cancer in November; his friend and colleague, Brownsville Chief of Police Benigno Reyna, accepted the award in Houston on his behalf. Chief Longoria lost his battle with cancer in December. Shortly before his death, Attorney General Janet Reno wrote Chief Longoria personally to congratulate him on this award, and to thank him for his extraordinary leadership in law enforcement. He is sorely missed.

## COMMUNITY-BASED PUBLIC SAFETY AWARDS

In 2000, the United States Attorney's Office announced an annual award for Outstanding Contribution to Community-Based Public Safety. These awards honor people for their exceptional leadership in forging partnerships among communities and their law enforcement agencies.



**Rose Gomez** was instrumental in organizing the first Weed & Seed program in the City of Brownsville. The Brownsville Weed & Seed initiative has developed a program that addresses cross-border underage drinking. This program has become a model for border communities from Brownsville to San Diego.



**Omar Velez** has been an articulate representative of the Gulfton Weed & Seed Initiative in Houston for the last 5 years. For most of his life, he has been a strong advocate for human rights. He has actively worked with immigrants and immigrant rights and organizations and has been a pivotal force in the Gulfton Community. Mr. Velez is a community leader who has gained the respect of everyone with whom he works.

**George Hodge** has been the leader of the Weed & Seed Initiative in Corpus Christi since 1994. The program grew out of the community's desperation over the violent criminality surrounding the street drug market. Last year, Attorney General Janet Reno awarded one of the Corpus Christi residents active in the Weed & Seed Steering Committee the Attorney General's Millenium Award for Community Service. Most importantly, the violent crime rate in the Weed & Seed neighborhoods dropped dramatically.

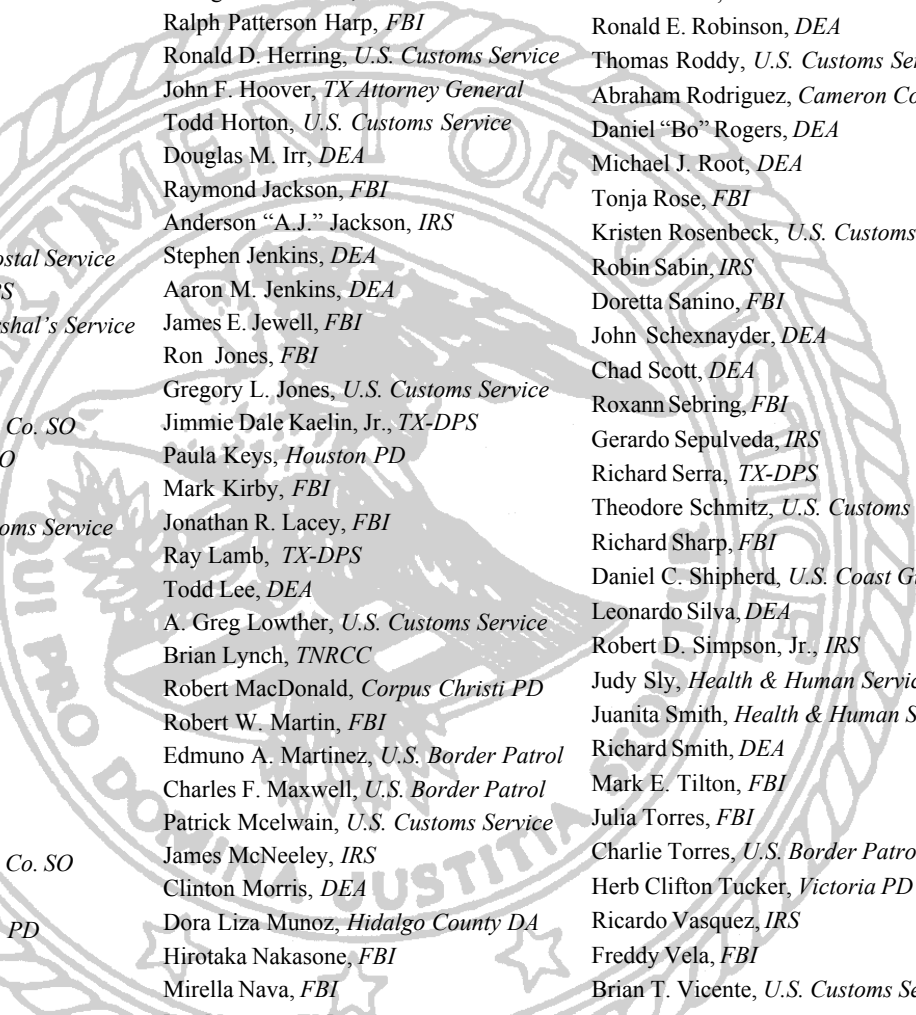


**Nereida Morales** of McAllen has been instrumental in bridging the differences between related initiatives sponsored by the U.S. Attorney's Office: Weed & Seed, the Comprehensive Strategy Program, Gun Violence Reduction Initiative, and the Community Youth Development Program. Through her leadership of selfless commitment, Ms. Morales has become a guarantor that community-based public safety programs become a positive reality for the intended community.



## LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARDS

*In 2000, the following law enforcement officials received special recognition from the U.S. Attorney's Office for their exceptional professionalism, hardwork and dedication to cases and special projects throughout the year.*



Luis C. Alaniz, <i>Cameron Co. DA</i>	Angela Hammons, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>	Susan K. Ridley, <i>FBI</i>
Arnold Alcantar, <i>U.S. Border Patrol</i>	Peter Hanna, <i>FBI</i>	Neal Roberts, <i>IRS</i>
Rene L. Amaya, <i>FBI</i>	Rufugio Hernandez, <i>HIDTA</i>	Neal Roberts, <i>IRS</i>
Robert V. Andrews, <i>FBI</i>	Ralph Patterson Harp, <i>FBI</i>	Ronald E. Robinson, <i>DEA</i>
David W. Batista, <i>IRS</i>	Ronald D. Herring, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>	Thomas Roddy, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>
Maria G. Borsuk, <i>FBI</i>	John F. Hoover, <i>TX Attorney General</i>	Abraham Rodriguez, <i>Cameron Co. SO</i>
Randy Bowling, <i>FBI</i>	Todd Horton, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>	Daniel "Bo" Rogers, <i>DEA</i>
Ronald Brown, <i>DEA</i>	Douglas M. Irr, <i>DEA</i>	Michael J. Root, <i>DEA</i>
George Brunner, <i>DEA</i>	Raymond Jackson, <i>FBI</i>	Tonja Rose, <i>FBI</i>
Michael D. Byerley, <i>DEA</i>	Anderson "A.J." Jackson, <i>IRS</i>	Kristen Rosenbeck, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>
Richard D. Carlson, <i>U.S. Postal Service</i>	Stephen Jenkins, <i>DEA</i>	Robin Sabin, <i>IRS</i>
Gerardo H. Carrillo, <i>TX-DPS</i>	Aaron M. Jenkins, <i>DEA</i>	Doretta Sanino, <i>FBI</i>
Russell T. Carter, <i>U.S. Marshal's Service</i>	James E. Jewell, <i>FBI</i>	John Schexnayder, <i>DEA</i>
Rene Castaneda, <i>DEA</i>	Ron Jones, <i>FBI</i>	Chad Scott, <i>DEA</i>
Adan Cruz, <i>TX-DPS</i>	Gregory L. Jones, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>	Roxann Sebring, <i>FBI</i>
Marion Ray Daniel, <i>Harris Co. SO</i>	Jimmie Dale Kaelin, Jr., <i>TX-DPS</i>	Gerardo Sepulveda, <i>IRS</i>
Martin Dear, <i>Harris Co. SO</i>	Paula Keys, <i>Houston PD</i>	Richard Serra, <i>TX-DPS</i>
John DeLeon, <i>FBI</i>	Mark Kirby, <i>FBI</i>	Theodore Schmitz, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>
Alfredo Delgado, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>	Jonathan R. Lacey, <i>FBI</i>	Richard Sharp, <i>FBI</i>
David Downing, <i>DEA</i>	Ray Lamb, <i>TX-DPS</i>	Daniel C. Shipherd, <i>U.S. Coast Guard</i>
Edward T. Dubberke, <i>IRS</i>	Todd Lee, <i>DEA</i>	Leonardo Silva, <i>DEA</i>
Michael Dubet, <i>DEA</i>	A. Greg Lowther, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>	Robert D. Simpson, Jr., <i>IRS</i>
Stephen J. Dudek, <i>DEA</i>	Brian Lynch, <i>TNRCC</i>	Judy Sly, <i>Health &amp; Human Services</i>
Patricia L. Durney, <i>FBI</i>	Robert MacDonald, <i>Corpus Christi PD</i>	Juanita Smith, <i>Health &amp; Human Services</i>
Dan Evans, <i>FBI</i>	Robert W. Martin, <i>FBI</i>	Richard Smith, <i>DEA</i>
Armando Fernandez, <i>FBI</i>	Edmundo A. Martinez, <i>U.S. Border Patrol</i>	Mark E. Tilton, <i>FBI</i>
George J. Fifer, <i>DCIS</i>	Charles F. Maxwell, <i>U.S. Border Patrol</i>	Julia Torres, <i>FBI</i>
Michael Fincher, <i>TX-DPS</i>	Patrick McElwain, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>	Charlie Torres, <i>U.S. Border Patrol</i>
Ronald Florence, <i>Alamance Co. SO</i>	James McNeeley, <i>IRS</i>	Herb Clifton Tucker, <i>Victoria PD</i>
Rob Foster, <i>FBI</i>	Clinton Morris, <i>DEA</i>	Ricardo Vasquez, <i>IRS</i>
Dennis J. Gafford, <i>Houston PD</i>	Dora Liza Munoz, <i>Hidalgo County DA</i>	Freddy Vela, <i>FBI</i>
Robert Garcia, <i>DEA</i>	Hiroataka Nakasone, <i>FBI</i>	Brian T. Vicente, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>
Fred Garza, <i>TX-DPS</i>	Mirella Nava, <i>FBI</i>	Sara Villarreal, <i>U.S. Pretrial Services</i>
Sylvia Garza, <i>IRS</i>	Tan Nguyen, <i>FBI</i>	Richard Vining, <i>DEA</i>
Gualberto Gonzalez, <i>Cameron Co. DA</i>	Jay Oxford, <i>DEA</i>	William "Jody" Warren, <i>FBI</i>
Armando Gonzalez, <i>U.S. Customs Service</i>	Cris Pendleton, <i>So. TX Narcotics &amp; SCTF</i>	Dennis Williams, <i>FBI</i>
James Griffis, <i>U.S. Marshal's Service</i>	Gerardo Perez, <i>TX-DPS</i>	Larry H. Williams, <i>Houston PD</i>
Robert Gutierrez, <i>FBI</i>	David G. Ramirez, <i>TX-DPS</i>	Don Wood, <i>FBI</i>
Cory Hallum, <i>DEA</i>	Kristin Rehler, <i>FBI</i>	

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